

COMMISSION CONFERENCE

JANUARY 3, 2001

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Present: Mayor Naugle
Commissioners Hutchinson, Katz, Moore and Smith

Also Present: City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk and Police Sergeant

I-A – Downtown Development Authority Interviews

The City Commission was scheduled to interview *Gale Butler, Quinn Goodchild, Charlie Ladd, Jack Loos* and *Debbie Orshefsky* for two Downtown Development Authority (DDA) positions, with terms beginning January 1, 2001 and expiring December 31, 2004. Commissioner Smith had a list of questions he wanted each candidate to answer during their presentations:

1. How much of a priority is the further development of mass transit to the downtown today?
2. Should there be a height limit in the downtown today?
3. How important is redevelopment of the Northwest and Flagler Heights areas to the continued health of the downtown?

Ms. Gale Butler advised that she was currently the Vice-President of AutoNation, and she had been contacted by a friend who thought she could be of service to the DDA in terms of marketing and public relations. She stated that she had been born in Fort Lauderdale and remembered it when it was very different. Ms. Butler described her background and said she had been involved in various boards including the Downtown Council because she loved Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Butler felt traffic issues had become a great problem in the downtown area, and she felt the northwest and Flagler Heights presented some good opportunities for affordable housing and mixed-use retail. She thought pursuing these opportunities could help resolve traffic issues downtown. As to height limits in the downtown area, Ms. Butler said she was not a huge fan of high-rise buildings, and she did not know that anything taller than 30 or 35 stories was necessary. She added that she would love to see mass transit opportunities explored like “people movers” back and forth over the bridges, for example.

Ms. Goodchild said she had lived in the City her whole life, and she had worked for the DDA when she had first graduated from college. At present, she was operating a family business in the downtown area managing office buildings, and she had worked for various non-profit organizations as well. Ms. Goodchild said she was a stakeholder in the downtown area, and she felt mass transit should be a priority. She felt, in fact, that it was crucial, but it had to be more convenient than driving a car in order to meet the needs of downtown workers and residents.

Ms. Goodchild felt building height was best considered on an individual project basis because setting limits could sometimes limit creativity. She thought the slum and blighted areas surrounding the downtown had a negative impact on its economic potential, so redevelopment of the Northwest and Flagler Heights areas was very important. Ms. Goodchild added that she had the time to serve the DDA, and she was committed to doing a good job.

Mr. Ladd advised that he was the President of Barron Real Estate and resided on Sagamore Road. He described his development background and some of the projects he had worked on over the past few years to help make the downtown better. Mr. Ladd believed he could make a difference serving on the DDA, and he felt mass transit was something that had to be addressed now. As to height, he felt the direction the Commission was taking to ensure buildings interfaced with the River and surrounding neighborhoods was correct. He was not sure a hard and fast height rule was in order because it was a subjective effort, and the ability of a building to interface with people at the ground level was probably more important than height. Mr. Ladd added that he was peripherally involved with the northwest area on Federal Highway, and he thought neighborhoods should take advantage of the downtown vitality.

Mr. Loos was also a lifelong resident of Fort Lauderdale. He had served on the DDA Board for 12 years and had chaired the Board for three terms. Mr. Loos recalled that he and former Commissioner Sheila Harrigan had been the “mother and father” of the downtown trolley, which had originally been funded by the DDA, the City and the County. Unfortunately, it had not been as successful as it should have been, and he felt mass transit was clearly an issue that had to be addressed today. Mr. Loos said he was currently serving on the 3^d Avenue/Sistrunk Boulevard/Andrews Avenue corridor study committee, and he believed a light rail system was needed along some or all of those corridors.

Mr. Loos said he had owned a number of properties in the Flagler Heights area, and he had served on the City’s Community Services Board in the past, which had dealt with a number of issues related to the northwest area and Flagler Heights. As a DDA Board member, he had been a strong advocate of the notion that the downtown was only as strong as its surrounding neighborhoods. He felt there were neighborhoods that needed help, and he thought commitment was necessary in the form of intelligent investment. Mr. Loos referred to building height in the downtown area. He felt the issue was dependent upon the site on which a structure was located. Mr. Loos thought there was still a lot of work to be done with respect to the downtown, and he felt he had a valuable historic perspective on the issues. He did, however, feel there should be some mechanism by which the City could provide a “quick read” on whether or not a proposed development was going to be acceptable.

Ms. Orshefsky said she was an Attorney in a firm that had opened 16 years ago, and she had joined it in 1987. Over the course of the past 15 years, she had been involved in a number of projects in downtown Fort Lauderdale and throughout the State. Ms. Orshefsky specialized in land development and environmental law with a particular focus on downtown infill redevelopment. She felt she had a good understanding of the processes involved, the downtown, and its surrounding neighborhoods. Ms. Orshefsky had served on the City’s Civil Service Board, and was currently serving on the Charter Revision Board.

Ms. Orshefsky said she had helped form the Transportation Management Association (TMA), and there had been some early efforts to bring the City “of age” as an urban environment. She felt mass transit was essential to continued redevelopment and the quality of everyone’s business and personal lives in the downtown area. Ms. Orshefsky noted that moving people downtown was important, but it was just as important to work with other agencies and organizations to ensure that thousands of people had the opportunity to take advantage of mass transit systems.

Ms. Orshefsky felt it was important to view the downtown not just as the core area with office buildings, but as part of a much larger area. She thought it was essential to provide a wider variety of housing and neighborhood services in and around the downtown area. Ms. Orshefsky did not think building height was the enemy many communities considered it. She felt it was an urban design matter, and the focus should be shifted to the first three or four levels of a building.

Mr. Fred Fazio suggested that the candidates indicate how they qualified for membership on the DDA Board. He noted that the requirements were quite specific. Mayor Naugle agreed that was a good idea.

Ms. Butler advised she was the owner of a property at 110 Southeast 6th Street. Ms. Orshefsky was a shareholder of the corporation that leased property at 515 East Las Olas Boulevard. Ms. Goodchild stated that she was the owner of property at 633 South Andrews Avenue. Mr. Loos was the owner of Las Olas Riverfront, and Mr. Ladd owned property at 1 North Federal Highway. Mayor Naugle assumed the lessee had to pay the taxes at 515 Las Olas Boulevard as part of the lease. Ms. Orshefsky said she could provide additional information in that regard.

Mayor Naugle was pleased there were so many great candidates for consideration. Commissioner Smith agreed the City was fortunate to have people of this caliber who were willing to serve.

Commissioner Hutchinson believed the Commission had decided to ask the DDA about the possibility of expanding the Board because a lot of people were gone during the summer, and the Board dwindled down during those months. She did not know if that had ever been done. Mayor Naugle thought that might take a legislative amendment. Commissioner Hutchinson noted that had been discussed, but she wondered if there had been any follow-up. No one was aware of any.

Commissioner Smith suggested that the DDA Board be requested to consider the possibility of expanding the number of members and, if so, the State Legislature could be lobbied. It was agreed. Commissioner Moore noted that the City could lobby for a change if this was something the Commission felt should be done. Commissioner Hutchinson thought the Commission had felt it was necessary in January, 1999 when the subject had been discussed. Mayor Naugle desired input from the DDA Board.

Action: DDA Board to be requested to consider expanded membership.

I-B – Citizens Board of Recognition

Scheduled for consideration were recommendations from the Citizens Board of Recognition to designate the following individuals for the honorary titles shown for the year 2001 as follows:

William V. Keith, Citizen of the Year
The Honorable Jim Scott, Distinguished Citizen
George “Bob” Gill, Honored Founder
Thomas L. Tapp, Exemplary City Employee

Commissioner Hutchinson referred to the minutes of the meeting at which this subject had been discussed. She had not seen mention of any other individuals being considered, although she had submitted some names for consideration. The City Manager stated that out of courtesy, the meeting minutes had not historically reflected the names of other persons considered but not selected. He said quite a few names had been submitted, and the Board had discussed honoring some of those individuals in future years.

Commissioner Katz acknowledged that all of the individuals recommended for these titles were honorable and worthy of recognition, but she hoped the Board would recognize women and minorities, too. The City Manager said he would remind the Board of that, and he noted that there had been people of various backgrounds and gender considered. He was sure the Board was sensitive to the issue and that would be reflected in future year's recommendations.

Mayor Naugle inquired as to the date when these honorees would be recognized. Ms. Leslie Backus explained that the date would be set based on the availability of the honorees.

Action: Approved.

I-C – Annexation of Southwest Area (also known as the Riverland Road Area)

Presented for discussion was the annexation of the Southwest Area, also known as the Riverland Road Area, in response to the City of Dania Beach's local bill filed for annexation. The City Manager noted that a memorandum had been distributed in this regard, and Romeo Lavarias was presented to provide a summary. He advised that he had recently received the Annexation Study and copies had been prepared for the Commission, but staff was seeking direction today on whether or not the City should pursue annexation of the Riverland Road Area. Mayor Naugle understood the City had developed the financial figures. The City Manager agreed that was correct.

Mr. Lavarias, Office of Community and Comprehensive Planning, reported that an ad hoc committee of the Broward Legislative Delegation would be meeting to take recommendations and hear testimony on the processing of bills to forward to the State Legislature for the 2001 session. One of the bills that would be considered would be an annexation bill for Broward County, and the City of Dania Beach had officially filed a bill for the annexation of the subject area. He pointed out the area on a map and described its boundaries and stated that Fort Lauderdale, Plantation, Davie and Dania Beach were the only cities that could consider annexing this area under the rules.

Mr. Lavarias said staff had estimated the cost of servicing the subject area and projected revenues, and a determination had been made that the area would be revenue positive. However, monies would be lost in the Water and Sewer fund due to the fact that the 25% surcharge currently applied to the area would no longer be applied if it was annexed. Commissioner Moore understood that even with that loss, the area would still be revenue positive. Mr. Lavarias agreed that was correct.

Mr. Lavarias requested Commission direction on approaching the Delegation in an attempt to annex the area. He explained that the City could request that the bill be amended to include Fort Lauderdale as one of the choices upon which residents would vote. The City could also file its own bill expressing interest in the area.

Commissioner Moore wondered what the City had done to demonstrate to the community its interests in annexing the area. Mr. Lavarias stated that the County had offered to hire a consultant to put together all the different information about services that would be available if the area was annexed into any of the adjacent cities. He advised that the consultant report was distributed to all of the residents, but it only provided facts and figures and offered no conclusion. Therefore, residents had to analyze the data and decide for themselves what would be in their best interests. Mr. Lavarias noted that only Dania Beach and Fort Lauderdale had provided all the information requested by the consultant.

Commissioner Moore asked if any interest had been expressed by residents to be annexed into any city. Mr. Lavarias stated that some of the neighborhood association presidents had expressed interest in annexation, and staff had attended some association meetings to observe, but no presentations had been made yet. Commissioner Moore inquired as to the estimated population of the area, and Mr. Lavarias reported there were approximately 5,400 residents, based upon the consultant study.

Mayor Naugle recalled that a previous study had divided the area into two different zones, and adding the figures resulted in a loss. However, this study showed a gain. Commissioner Smith wondered what had changed to make the area revenue positive now. Mayor Naugle thought one big change involved fire services. At one time, there had been discussion about the need for a new engine company, but now it appeared the area could be served by the existing company at Riverland Road and Davie Boulevard. The Fire Chief said he had not been here when the previous study had been done, but Fort Lauderdale was already serving some parts of the subject area. He believed some additional staff and medical units would be necessary, but a whole new engine company was not necessary. Commissioner Smith asked if there was a County station serving the area now, and the Fire Chief replied there was a County station on 31st Avenue. The Deputy Fire Chief displayed a map and pointed out the various fire stations.

The City Manager reported that Dania Beach might want to add the Broadview area to its annexation bill, and he thought Fort Lauderdale might want to examine that area as well. He noted that the two areas were contiguous, and staff would have to examine the costs and revenues if that was the Commission's desires. Mayor Naugle had assumed staff was preparing figures on all the contiguous unincorporated areas. Commissioner Moore asked staff to examine the figures with the area squared off to eliminate the commercial properties. He did not necessarily support the idea, but he wanted to know the impact.

Commissioner Moore thought staff should seek to annex the Riverland Road area. It was contiguous to Fort Lauderdale, and the City was already providing water and sewer services. In addition, the City had worked in cooperation with the area on several improvement projects. He felt it was a "natural," and thought the area should be more aggressively pursued. Mayor Naugle agreed it would be logical, particularly since Fort Lauderdale was already providing water and sewer services, and dredging had been done in the area. Commissioner Smith was concerned about police services.

Mayor Naugle noted that the figures made it appear the annexation would be a huge windfall for the City, but he knew there would be capital expenditures and additional staff. He felt there should be some type of core charge to cover these costs. Mayor Naugle believed this area would probably break even, but he did not think it would actually be revenue positive. The City Manager stated that there was a means of assessing administrative costs, and a certain amount could be appropriated for necessary capital improvements.

The City Manager understood the Commission wanted staff to pursue the Riverland Road area and express the City's interest in annexing the area to the Broward Delegation. Mayor Naugle recalled that in the past, the City had asked areas to come forward if they were interested in being annexed. Now, however, Dania was being aggressive in its efforts. He felt the City's position should be to offer the residents the option. Commissioner Moore thought the City should go further than that with both he and Commissioner Hutchinson attending association meetings in the area to entertain the idea. Mayor Naugle said he had done that before and would be glad to do it again.

Commissioner Hutchinson advised that she had attended some meetings and learned that while Dania Beach had filed a bill, it was apparently not actively "courting" residents. She noted that the Southwest Coalition had been surprised to hear about the bill.

Mayor Naugle understood staff would proceed as to the Riverland Road Area and provide the Commission with an update on the Broadview area.

Action: Approved as discussed.

I-D – Residential Dwelling Units in the Downtown Regional Activity Center (RAC)

A discussion and status report was scheduled on the remaining amount of residential dwelling units in the Downtown RAC. The City Manager stated that a written report had been distributed, and he had been in communication with the County Administrator about putting this issue before the County Commission on an emergency basis, although the matter had not yet been finalized.

Mr. Chris Wren, Community and Comprehensive Planning Manager, was seeking official direction from the Commission in this regard. He stated that one option was to use some of the allocated units in the northwest for just the CRA portion of the downtown as an interim measure. Mr. Wren advised this could be accomplished within 6 months to a year, but both the City and County Commission would have to adopt it as an emergency measure. Another option was to study the entire area as to the ultimate population, which was a long-term solution that would take more time.

Mayor Naugle wondered, if it reached the point where all the residential units were used, if taking units from the Northwest could be limited to developments proposed north of Broward Boulevard. He explained that one school of thought might be that there had been units approved in the downtown that had not been built, and it might be wise to experience traffic and life in the area with those units before attempting to increase the number of available units. Mayor Naugle believed that might be easier to "sell" to the County Commission than just increasing the number of units along Riverwalk, for example.

Mr. Wren believed there were about 5,000 units in the northwest area. He wanted to ensure that existing CRA projects had an adequate number of units to carry out the initiatives. Whatever was left over, and staff thought that number was 500 to 1,200, could be used in the downtown CRA only under the first option. Mr. Wren explained the intent was to use the CRA units in the CRA. At present, some of the units could not be used in the area east of the FEC railroad tracks. Mayor Naugle understood that was due to the fact that the County boundary was marked by the tracks. Mr. Wren agreed that was correct. He explained that staff first wanted to ensure preservation of the northwest initiative and then use any remaining units in the CRA portion east of the tracks.

Commissioner Moore had not been “sold” on the idea that these units were not available. He stated that the blighted area in northwest Fort Lauderdale had not been very successful in attracting investment, and he thought the probable reason for that was due to the number of units. Commissioner Moore did not want to eliminate the only tool that would interest a developer in the northwest area – the available units. Before giving any away, he wanted staff to prove that the units were available because the Planning Council seemed to be indicating otherwise. Mayor Naugle pointed out that much of the development did not require platting.

Mr. Wren explained that the letter from the Planning Council related to platting requirements. He stated that there were certain rules that required platting or replatting upon certain triggers. Based on that, the Planning Council indicated there was a total of 5,100 units, and units were pulled from the pool as platting occurred. Mr. Wren said that by virtue of platting, units were allocated, but platting did not guarantee a right to build. He explained that Fort Lauderdale was the “dwelling unit keepers” in this instance, although there had been discussion about shortening the term of site plan validity in order to decrease the timeframe during which the units could be “horded.”

Commissioner Moore was concerned about giving up units in the northwest, although Mayor Naugle’s recommendation to devote them only to the area north of Broward Boulevard made sense. Mayor Naugle noted that some units were allocated for duplexes and fourplexes, but there would only be single-family houses in a particular area. Therefore, he thought the maximum number of units allowed minus those that would be built, left remaining units that could be used.

Mr. Wren stated that staff was in the process of completing CAP Area 1 and, based on the dwelling units allowed, there was a surplus of 4,530 units. Of those, enough could be reserved to build out all the vacant lots, deal with Sistrunk Boulevard and the Konover property, and still have about 1,000 units left.

At 3:21 P.M., Commissioner Moore left the meeting. He returned at 3:22 P.M.

Commissioner Smith wondered if another track could be started at the same time to increase the number of units in the northwest at the same time. Mr. Wren agreed staff wanted to do that, too, and the second longer-range option would accommodate the necessary study. He explained that a consultant would have to be hired for the study to meet all the goals and objectives. Mr. Wren believed that process would take until the middle of 2002, and the shorter-term option was to use some of those units in the CRA and pay them back later.

Commissioner Moore pointed out that the development that was occurring and would occur in the CRA did not involve affordable housing. He noted that multiple units could be developed on the Sweeting Estates property, for example, and he did not want to take away any possibilities from the northwest. Commissioner Smith stated that the situation in Flagler Heights was imminent because developers wanted to build now, and there was a good cushion in the northwest area for the near future. That was not true in Flagler Heights, and the process to increase the number of units could be initiated to address the longer-term issues in the northwest.

Mr. Wren stated that there were only 1,500 units remaining in the CRA, and some 2,000 units were desired. Mayor Naugle acknowledged that development units were tied up that would likely never be built. Commissioner Smith pointed out that the JPI development was not even on the list yet. Commissioner Moore did not want to give up something that did not have to be given up yet. Commissioner Smith wondered if the units could be held in abeyance in case they were, in fact, needed. Commissioner Moore was willing to support that idea.

Mr. Wren proposed that he place hard figures on a map to reflect the various initiatives as a starting point. If amenable to the Commission, the County could be asked to amend the text of the Comprehensive Plan with conditions and criteria to establish an “escrow” account. Commissioner Moore found that acceptable. The City Manager stated that from the emergency perspective, a unanimous vote would still be required of both the City and the County Commission.

Commissioner Hutchinson inquired about the study. Mr. Wren stated that although the ultimate density of the downtown RAC would be examined, an RFP would be created to consider the ultimate density of the downtown, the northwest, and the south because it was important they all be linked in order to address issues such as mass transit. In addition, the study would examine the 20 to 50 year build out of all 3 areas.

Mayor Naugle asked if the DDA would be contributing. Mr. Wren introduced Ms. Stacey Dahlstrom, the Project Manager, who had presented the issue to the DDA. He stated that the DDA was willing to be both financial and technical contributors to the study, but the County had not yet been approached pending Commission direction. Mr. Wren thought it might be helpful if the Commission was present when the emergency amendment was requested. Commissioner Smith agreed there should be unanimous support by the City Commission.

The City Manager did not want to present anything to the County Commission unless there was at least a 50% chance of success. Commissioner Smith suggested that staff determine some of the possible objections in order to be prepared to address those issues. The City Manager agreed to do so.

Action: Approved as discussed.

At 3:35 P.M., the meeting was recessed. It was reconvened at 3:48 P.M.

III-B – Advisory Board Vacancies

1. Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board

Commissioner Smith wished to reinstate George LeMieux to the Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at regular meeting.

2. Board of Trustees, General Employees Retirement System

Mayor Naugle wished to reappoint Mark Burnam to this Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at regular meeting.

3. Board of Trustees, Police and Firefighters Retirement System

Mayor Naugle wished to reappoint all of his appointees who were eligible to serve on this Board, but he understood the rules had been changed, and he thought Joe Sanchez might be accepted. Mayor Naugle had also determined that Bob Helmholdt had reached his term limit, but he would be eligible for the new seat, so he proposed that these two names be submitted to the Board as nominees.

Action: Recommend that either Joe Sanchez or Robert Helmholdt be considered by the Board for the seventh position.

4. Budget Advisory Board

Action: Deferred.

5. Citizen Review Board

The Commission wished to reappoint Fenel Antoine, Joe Robinson, Patricia Mayers, Dean Trantalis, Donald Bastedo, Captain Lamberti, Detective Ward, and Sergeant Sheehan to the Citizen Review Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

6. Civil Service Board

The City Manager wanted to appoint Art W. Kennedy to the Civil Service Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

7. Community Appearance Board

Commissioner Hutchinson wished to appoint Shirley Chatham and John McNamara to the Community Appearance Board. Commissioner Moore wanted to reappoint Ayisha Okafor, and Commissioner Katz wished to reappoint Lee Ruckman. Mayor Naugle wanted to reappoint Diane L. Schuster, Tom Catalino, Steven LaFonte, and Steve Hillberg. Commissioner Smith reappointed Miranda Lopez and Christopher Eck. Commissioner Hutchinson reappointed Chuck Radkowski.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

8. Community Services Board

The Commission wished to reappoint Harvey Meltzer to the Community Services Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

9. Downtown Development Authority

Commissioner Katz understood that Debbie Orshefsky had withdrawn her name from consideration due to the requirements for service on the DDA Board. Using a multi-vote approach, the Commission appointed Jack Loos and Gale Butler.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

10. Economic Development Advisory Board

Commissioner Hutchinson wanted to appoint Jim Carras to the Economic Development Advisory Board and to reappoint Eason Dobbs. Commissioner Katz wished to appoint John Pisz. Lucy: Commissioner Smith reappointed Rocky Rodriguez, and Commissioner Moore reappointed Sidney Calloway.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

11. Insurance Advisory Board

Commissioner Smith wanted to appoint Ted Hess to the Insurance Advisory Board. Mayor Naugle understood Scott A. DiSalvo could be reappointed. The Commission reappointed Steve Botkin and Fritz Richter, Jr.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

12. Unsafe Structures and Housing Appeals Board

Action: Deferred.

IV – City Commission Reports

1. Improvements to Fire Station 2

Commissioner Smith wondered if it was appropriate to be making improvements to Fire Station 2 since it would be vacated within a year or so. Mr. Greg Kisela, Assistant City Manager, explained that only life safety Code violations would be addressed. He stated that staff would let the Commission know how much it would cost, and only work that was absolutely necessary would be done. Mayor Naugle thought it would be 2 years before a move could be made.

Action: As discussed.

2. City Walking Tour

Commissioner Smith was pleased to hear there would be a City Walking Tour. Mayor Naugle understood the City Manager would get in touch with people in this regard.

Action: As discussed.

3. Club Atlantis

Commissioner Smith had received a letter from the Beach Council about the Club Atlantis' latest effort to evade the law, and he had made some inquiries. He stated that the City would be asking the courts to release the injunction against arresting the owner and principles of Club Atlantis, although Notices to Appear could be issued. The City Attorney reported that a hearing was scheduled for January 30, 2001 before Judge Streitfeld to request that the injunction be lifted so physical arrests could be made. Commissioner Smith assumed the "subterfuge" on the part of the club and its employees would be raised at the hearing.

The City Attorney stated that staff was continuing to enforce the law through issuance of Notices to Appear. He advised that staff did not consider certain situations to be valid employment relationships. Commissioner Smith asked if anyone had been to court yet, and the City Attorney replied that no trials had yet been held, but the first case would come up in January. Mayor Naugle understood the City Prosecutor was handling the case.

Commissioner Katz understood that if there were a certain number of complaints, a club's hours would be rolled back to midnight. The City Attorney stated that staff was working on that law in addition to taking the other matters to court. Commissioner Smith reported that through the Police Department's efforts, the crime rate in the area had rolled back to "pre-spike" levels.

Action: As discussed.

4. Wingate Newsletter

Commissioner Moore complimented the citizens' committee on the quality of the newsletters that had been going out about the Wingate site. He had seen a video about the tower coming down, so everything was moving forward. Commissioner Moore believed the Community Advisory Committee would be meeting again at 6:30 P.M. on January 22, 2001.

Action: None.

5. Kwanzaa Event

Commissioner Moore complimented staff on the Kwanzaa celebration. He had been unable to attend, but he had heard that the quality of the program had been excellent. He stated that since he had some campaign funds left over, he intended to contribute the money to the City to help support this celebration next year. Commissioner Moore pointed out that the family participation in the event had been great, and he applauded Parks & Recreation Department staff. The City Manager added that he'd been given the opportunity to present a key to the City to the creator of Kwanzaa, Dr. Molenda, a few weeks ago.

Action: None.

6. Drivers Education Program

Commissioner Moore wanted to thank the City Manager for his efforts toward bringing a drivers education program to Fort Lauderdale. He reported that a professional service contract had been entered into to provide this training to young people, and he was very pleased. Mayor Naugle wondered if scholarships could be solicited for those who could not afford the \$125 fee. He thought there might be some car dealerships that might be willing to help. Commissioner Moore thought that was a good idea and suggested a letter from the City Commission soliciting sponsorships. Mayor Naugle thought insurance companies might be helpful as well.

Action: Letter to be drafted as discussed.

7. Northwest 13th Street and 19th Street

Commissioner Moore wanted to compliment the contractor working on Northwest 13th Street because a good job was being done, and he wanted to see the same type of project on 19th Street from 9th Avenue to the City limits. Commissioner Smith asked if there were any Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds available. The City Manager recalled that he had committed to seeking resources and providing a recommendation in this regard. Mayor Naugle suggested transportation project funds. Commissioner Smith believed there was a waiting list for those monies.

Action: City Manager to provide recommendation.

8. Northwest 15th Avenue and Broward Boulevard

Commissioner Moore recalled that Broward Beautiful had provided \$15,000 some time ago for a beautification project at Northwest 15th Avenue and Broward Boulevard. He stated that the project had been completed, and it was a beautiful entranceway. Commissioner Moore noted there was a sign acknowledging the contribution of Broward Boulevard, but it was not very sturdy, and he asked staff to see if something more sturdy could be provided.

9. Crime in Northwest Area

Commissioner Moore was pleased with the Police Department's efforts to address street level crime in the northwest area. He felt more could still be done, but progress was being made.

Action: None.

10. Cleveland Clinic

Commissioner Katz reported that all of the health care facilities involved were working together on an informational brochure to be distributed to residents on the Barrier Island and to hold town meetings on the subject. Even without the Cleveland Clinic, it was felt there would be adequate emergency coverage, and experts were going to appear at the town meetings to explain that position.

Commissioner Smith felt a “Plan B” was needed. He noted that efforts were still being made on the Legislative level to amend some of the rural hospital laws. Commissioner Katz advised that did not look very promising.

Action: None.

11. Economic Development Workshop

Commissioner Katz hoped to have another economic development workshop in the near future. The City Manager believed a workshop could be as held as early as February. Mayor Naugle believed a joint meeting with the County Commission was upcoming, and the City Clerk advised it was scheduled for February 20, 2001. The City Manager stated that an economic development plan could be laid out in a Friday memo after the joint meeting, and then a workshop could be scheduled.

Commissioner Smith said he had been reminded by the Historical Society that the New River Inn was available for public workshop meetings. That reminded Commissioner Katz that there were a few things the City could do to assist, such as landscape maintenance in nearby areas. She understood Ms. Joan Mikus would be presenting an update very soon.

Commissioner Moore said his only concern about extending existing maintenance efforts into the subject areas was that other non-profit organizations might want the same courtesy. Mayor Naugle pointed out that the City owned the New River Inn, so there was a difference. Commissioner Moore pointed out that the City also owned the Lincoln Park property. Mayor Naugle thought the idea was reasonable when it came to City-owned buildings.

Action: As discussed.

12. DRI and IL Agreement – International Airport

Commissioner Hutchinson said she had spoken with the City Manager about the DRI and the Interlocal Agreement with the County relating to Fort Lauderdale International Airport. She stated that there were a couple of projects she did not want to see “lost in the shuffle.” In particular, she was concerned about the right turn lane at State Road 84 and 9th Avenue to make the area more pedestrian-friendly and deal with cut-through traffic. Another project of concern was 32nd Court, between 9th and 12th Avenues, and there had been discussion about some green space such as a hedge in that area. Mayor Naugle asked the City Manager to provide a status report on these two projects by early February.

Action: City Manager to provide status report.

13. Marina Mile

Commissioner Hutchinson reported that she had attended the Marina Mile Association holiday party, and she had spoken with Commissioner Bob Mikes, of the City of Dania Beach. He wanted to work with the City to put some pressure on the Airport to cut down on some of the noisier, smaller aircraft.

Action: None.

14. Southeast 17th Street Causeway Bridge

Commissioner Hutchinson said that she was still receiving a lot of calls about the 17th Street Bridge. People were wondering why it was still being opened every half hour now that it was higher. Mayor Naugle noted that vessels were getting larger and larger, but now the bridge did not have to stay open as long because there were not as many vessels lined up that needed it open to pass. Commissioner Hutchinson asked Mr. Kisela to look into it because there was a lot of frustration on the part of some residents.

Mayor Naugle felt the situation was much improved. He thought the main problem was that there had been talk of eliminating the timed openings, but he felt that was best so people could plan around it. Commissioner Smith wondered if the openings could be changed from on the half hour to on the hour. Mayor Naugle did not think that would work because then the boats would stack up and, when the bridge was opened, it would stay open for much longer periods. He felt the current methods were working very well.

Action: As discussed.

15. Neighborhood Priorities

Commissioner Hutchinson reported that she had sent out letters to neighborhoods within her district to determine what their priorities were for 2001. She also planned to speak at the Council of Civic Association meeting on January 8, 2001 in this regard and about how civic associations could best be identified. Mayor Naugle asked the City Clerk to post notice of the January 9, 2001 Council meeting.

Action: As discussed.

16. Cell Phone Towers

Mayor Naugle referred to a recent newspaper article about the Church By The Sea allowing its steeple to be used for a cell phone tower. He noted that his father had built that church in the 1950s, and you could not even tell the tower existed. Mayor Naugle felt this was particularly important because good coverage was essential as people moved more and more to wireless communication. For those with concerns about the appropriateness of cell phone towers at churches, he felt this was a public service because cell phones could save lives during emergencies.

Action: None.

17. Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights – Joint Meetings

Mayor Naugle believed all the Commissioners had received notice of the Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights CRA monthly meeting schedule. He noted that the Commission already had 2 meetings per month, and they were being asked to increase that schedule by 50%. He wondered if monthly meetings were really necessary and suggested meeting every other month and additionally as necessary.

Commissioner Moore felt this was a critical term for the CRA, and he thought the Commission should follow the proposed monthly schedule. Commissioner Smith suggested starting 1 meeting each month an hour earlier. Commissioner Hutchinson believed that had been tried and no one liked it. Commissioner Smith proposed 9 meetings each year. It was agreed.

Action: 9 meetings with CRA to be scheduled per year.

18. County Parks GOB Committee

Commissioner Katz understood that requests for appointees to the County Parks GOB Committee had to be submitted by March 1, 2001. Mayor Naugle suggested that letters of support for the appointment of the Commissioners Katz and Hutchinson be sent to the County. Commissioner Smith advised that he had also applied.

Commissioner Katz understood Fort Lauderdale would receive 3 Challenge Grants, and she had been told that non-profits could file separately with the approval of the City. Mr. Greg Kisela, Assistant City Manager, advised that he was trying to get clarification in this regard, and a meeting had been scheduled with County staff next week. Afterwards, a report would be provided to the City Commission, and staff was working on a project list for consideration.

Action: As discussed.

19. National League of Cities

Mayor Naugle encouraged the Commissioners to attend the National League of Cities Conference scheduled for March 9 through 13, 2001 in Washington, D.C. He felt the effort was very worthwhile.

Action: As discussed.

V – City Manager Reports

1. Employee Lawsuits

The City Manager reported that the Mayor had been served today with 3 lawsuit filings for cases that dated back to 1997. Mayor Naugle stated that the alleged infractions had occurred during the Hanbury administration. The City Manager said he had received a summons from Larry Ernest, Jr., who apparently felt he was the real City Manager of Fort Lauderdale.

Action: None.

2. Item M-14, Regular Agenda – New River Associates

The City Manager reported that the Plaintiff in the matter related to Item M-14 on the Regular Agenda had requested deferral of the item to the next Commission meeting. The City Attorney stated that this was not necessarily bad news, but the details were complicated.

Action: Item M-14, Regular Agenda, Deferred.

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 P.M.

NOTE: A MECHANICAL RECORDING HAS BEEN MADE OF THE FOREGOING PROCEEDINGS, OF WHICH THESE MINUTES ARE A PART, AND IS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.